

## 21.

The Avian Genus *Zosterops* in Siam, with Description of One New Race.

H. G. DEIGNAN.\*

Recent revisional studies of the white-eyes of the Asiatic mainland have either (through scarcity of suitable material) given the impression that the genus stopped short at the eastern confines of the Indian Empire or (for the same reason combined with a lack of knowledge of Siamese zoögeography) have handed down opinions on distribution and nomenclature at variance with the apparent facts. My own investigations lead me to recognize in Siam four species, one of which (*palpebrosa*) is represented by no less than four geographical races:

1. *Zosterops erythropleura* Swinhoe.

*Zosterops erythropleura* Swinhoe, *Proc. Zool. Soc. London*, August, 1863, pp. 204, 298 (Shanghai, China).

A very uncommon winter visitor to northern Siam, where it has been recorded only from Doi Su:thep, Doi Chieng Dao, and Phu Kha, at elevations between 4,500 and 5,500 feet; the extreme dates for its stay are 7 November (1936) on Doi Su:thep and 7 April (1936) on Phu Kha.

2. *Zosterops japonica simplex* Swinhoe.

*Zosterops simplex* Swinhoe, *Ibis*, July, 1863, pp. 294-295 ("Southern China, from Canton to Foochow").

An uncommon or locally common winter visitor to the northern provinces of Chiang-mai, Lampang, and Chiengrai, recorded between 9 November (1930) on Doi Langka and 1 March (1933) on Doi Su:thep; it is chiefly a bird of the plains but has been taken on Doi Chieng Dao at 4,500 feet (2), on Doi Su:thep at 5,500 feet (1), and on Doi Pha Hom Pok at 6,400 feet (1).

3. *Zosterops palpebrosa mesoxantha* Salvadori.

*Zosterops mesoxantha* Salvadori, *Ann. Mus. Civ. St. Nat. Genova*, ser. 2, vol. 7, 1889, p. 396 (Taho, Karen-ni).

*Zosterops palpebrosa vicina* Riley, *Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington*, vol. 42, 1929, p. 162 (Doi Su:thep, North Siam).

A common permanent resident on those hills of the Thanon Thong Chai and Khun Tan chains (with the exception of Doi Nang Keo?) which reach elevations in excess of 4,500 feet; on Doi Pha Hom Pok it ranges up to 6,000 feet and, on Doi Su:thep, has often been seen as low as 3,300 feet. Probably owing to the insufficient altitude, it has never been recorded from Doi Khun Tan by any one of the numerous collectors who have visited that mountain.

Our bird is neither *palpebrosa* (Bengal), which has the underparts vinaceous-ashy and the mesial streak of exceptional occurrence, nor is it *auriventer* (Tavoy), a coastal form which has the mesial streak broader and brighter and the retrices almost without olive-green edging.

4. *Zosterops palpebrosa joannae* La Touche.

*Zosterops aureiventer joannae* La Touche, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*, vol. 42, 1921, pp. 31-32 (Mengtz, S. E. Yunnan).

I place here two females taken by me on Doi Chieng Dao at 6,200 feet, 19 March, 1937; the two males and three females reported by Greenway (*Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool.*, 1940, p. 190) from Doi Nang Keo, 2,800 feet, 8-15 April, 1937 (examined); and, with reservations, a juvenal male from Phu Kha, 4,500 feet, 16 April, 1936. On Phu Kha, at the borders of Laos, it may well be the breeding race; to Doi Chieng Dao, where *mesoxantha* also occurs, it is merely a rare winter visitor; its status on Doi Nang Keo is unknown but, if it occurs only in winter, it is at least remarkable that not one of five specimens should belong to the resident form so common on the neighboring hills.

As quoted by Greenway (*loc. cit. supra*), Stresemann states, *in epist.*: "*Palpebrosa* from Mengtz, called *joannae* by La Touche, is very near to *mesoxantha* Salvadori, but has the flanks a slightly darker grey and the upperside more greenish, less yellowish. The name *joannae* may stand, therefore, but the racial characters are very feebly pronounced."

A white-eye, which may be *joannae*, occurs at all seasons in the lowland evergreen of Chiengrai province. My memory of certain specimens from Chiengrai-Town, in

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Sir Walter Williamson's collection, is that they agreed perfectly with my examples of *joannae* from the heights of Chieng Dao, but his birds were perhaps merely winter visitors. Three males taken by me at and near Wieng Pa Pao, 24 and 30 July, 1935, are more golden than any others seen and might be considered very worn *mesoxantha* but Salvadori's race is not otherwise known in Siam from so low an elevation and there is a strong possibility that *joannae* in the same state of wear would show an equally golden hue. Because of these doubtful points and the uncertain status of *joannae* on the nearby Doi Nang Keo, it seems best to leave them for the present without subspecific determination.

5. *Zosterops palpebrosa williamsoni*  
Robinson & Boden Kloss.

*Zosterops palpebrosa williamsoni* Robinson & Boden Kloss, *Journ. Nat. Hist. Soc. Siam*, vol. 3, 1919, p. 445 (Me Klong, Central Siam).

A resident of the western littoral of the Siamese Gulf, ranging along the eastern shore of the Malay Peninsula from Bangkok to Pattani.

6. *Zosterops palpebrosa auriventer* Hume.

[*Zosterops*] *auriventer* Hume, *Stray Feathers*, vol. 6, 1878, p. 519 (Tavoy).

A littoral form, resident along the western shore of the Malay Peninsula and occurring on the coast and islands of Siam from Victoria Point to the Malay States.

*Auriventer* is separable from *williamsoni* by the rather deeper yellow of the throat and under tail-coverts, by the presence of a broad and distinct mesial streak (exceptional in *williamsoni* and then barely indicated),

and by having the rectrices virtually without olive-green edging.

In applying Hume's name to this bird, I follow the line of reasoning set forth by Stresemann (*Journ. f. Orn.*, vol. 87, 1939, p. 158, footnote 2).

Away from the coasts, in montane and submontane districts of the Siamese portion of the Malay Peninsula, is found a race of *Zosterops atricapilla* (cf. Stresemann, *loc. cit. supra*, pp. 159-160) quite distinct from *Z. a. tahanensis* Ogilvie Grant (Malay States), with which it has been heretofore confused. I suggest that it be called

*Zosterops atricapilla wetmorei*, *subsp. nov.*

Type: Adult male, U. S. Nat. Mus. no. 234322, collected at Chong, near Trang, Peninsular Siam, 5 December, 1909, by C. Boden Kloss.

A series of 8 adults of the new form from the type locality, Khao Nong (3,000-4,300 feet), Khao Luang (3,400 feet), and "Khao Bhanam Bencha" (3,500 feet) differ from a series of 6 of *tahanensis* (including 4 topotypes) by having the upper parts a brighter and much more golden olive-green and by having the bill as much longer than that of *tahanensis* as this part is longer in *tahanensis* than in *sumatrana*.

N. B. Despite its name, *Zosterops palpebrosa siamensis* Blyth (Tenasserim) has never yet been noted within the borders of Siam, although it is evidently common at so near a locality as Mount Muleyit.

For the loan of valuable series of the birds here discussed, as well as of allied races, my cordial thanks are due the authorities of the American Museum of Natural History, of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, and of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.